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SPECTACLES.

ACCORDING to the encyclopædias and dictionaries, spectacles consist of two lenses so arranged in frames as to aid defective vision. To this end, and to suit every sort of visual deficiency, great varieties of the article have been invented. There are magnifying glasses and diminishing glasses, and glasses through which objects appear of their actual size. There are spectacles for daylight, spectacles for candle-light, and spectacles tinted with all sorts of hues, from pleasing pink to a sombre slate-colour. Some are constructed to enable the wearer to perceive things which are at a distance; others to increase the distinctness of things which are near; Dr Wollaston's periscopic spectacles allow of looking sideways; and De La Court's reflecting glasses make up for the want of eyes in the back of the head, for they reveal what is going on behind backs! Again, viewing spectacles in reference to quality, and as articles of manufacture and trade, there are good, indifferent, and decidedly bad spectacles, the last being made not so much to be seen through, as—like the razors described by Peter Pindar—to sell. These generally give distorted appearances to objects, for the clearer viewing of which they were brought to assist.

It is our purpose in this paper to abandon the literal signification of the word spectacles, and to treat the term abstractedly from the actual article which is seen in the shops, in pedlars' packs, and on the noses of our elderly friends. We seek to give greater currency to the more enlarged, though metaphorical sense in which the word is used by many authors of high repute, both ancient and modern. Thus, Chaucer saith, that

'Povertie a spectacle is, as thinketh me,
Through which he may his very friends see.'

And Dryden, in commenting on the genius of Shakespeare, truly observes, that the great dramatist 'was naturally learned—he needed not the spectacles of books to read nature.' Thus, as a man is sometimes said to 'see' that which is invisible, such as a fine thought, the point of a joke, or the force of an argument, so would we draw attention not to mechanical, but to psychological spectacles—not to those which aid or derange the actual organs of sight, but to those which assist or falsify the mental vision.

These metaphorical spectacles being worn by a large majority of mankind, are in quite as great variety as the spectacles we have already described, and suit themselves to every age and condition. Ardent and imaginative youth, for example, on first entering active life, wears spectacles which exhibit everything in the brightest colours. Its keen sense of enjoyment, which makes it feel the mere act of existence to be a pleasure, extracts gratification out of whatever is presented to the senses. Painful feelings, when excited

in the young, are transient, and serve rather to heighten the effect of general enjoyment than to lessen it. Worldly experience has yet to darken the glowing picture—to give more truthful, and, alas! less favourable views of mankind, but, on the other hand, to exchange for restless and fevered, more permanent and assured sources of happiness. Hence, to the glowing imagination of such natures it is always summer; and they do not, as in after-life, enjoy the coming of the spring, because they know no winter. To them all men appear good, all nature seems beautiful. Such temperaments see every-thing *couleur de rose*—they wear *pink spectacles*.

These spectacles are by far the most dangerous to the real as well as to the mental perception. 'The habitual use of tinted spectacles,' remarks an experienced optician, 'gives rise to a succession of violent changes of colour, which are painful to the unpractised, and must be injurious to those who have become inured to them.' This is exactly the case with the false medium through which the world is often seen by youthful enthusiasm. Many a young man, viewing mankind in too glowing a light, has had some act of human frailty (by which, perhaps, he is made to suffer) unexpectedly revealed to him—has had the pink spectacles suddenly dashed from his vision! Then, in proportion as all was before unduly brilliant and beautiful, all appears now as falsely dark. He is what is called a 'disappointed man.' His imagination, which at first exaggerated the goodness of mankind, now exaggerates its wickedness. The darkened spectacles which are substituted as much incapacitate him from enjoying the brightness of the sun, as those he previously wore increased it; and he who before saw universal goodness, ceases to believe in benevolence; and the character of every human being appears to be shaded with self-interest or other faultiness. By constantly regarding the shadows of the picture, and those only, he grows old in his fatal uncharitableness, and is reduced to the unamiable condition of a cynic—a Diogenes; but a Diogenes who looks for honest men—not with a lamp, but with a dark lantern—for his vision is obscured with 'clouded' spectacles. Of a similar stamp are those desponding spirits who have a taste for the dismal of this life; who take delight in sighs and sadness, pathetic emotions, and heart-rending woe, and view human nature 'through the lens of a tear.'

Other varieties of spectacles are very generally worn, which are neither pink nor clouded, but work in matters of lesser importance the effects of both. The wearers of them are never contented with truth and nature simply as they see her. If they have to describe Primrose Hill, for example, they will tell you the ascent is almost perpendicular, and make reference to the Alps. A slight drizzle they exaggerate to a perfect torrent; for with them it never rains but it pours. In pictur-

ing a female acquaintance, with however moderate pretensions to beauty, they constantly apply the well-worn similitude concerning angels. Their particular friends are patterns of virtue, their enemies monsters of wickedness. They see everything in extremes, and are themselves subject by turns to the most delightful happiness, and to the direst misery. When a little pleased, they declare they are enchanted; when a little pained, 'the agony is excruciating.' Nothing that passes before, around, and within them, seems to present itself as it does to other eyes; for the fact is, they wear *magnifying glasses*.

Other persons want comprehensiveness of mental vision. Propound to them any grand scheme of benevolence or utility, and they try to scare you away from it by summing up the petty difficulties which lie in the way. Praise the character of a friend, and they peck away the value of your commendations by hinting certain minor faults and immaterial piccadilloes. The spectacles they wear contract their range of vision to a small circle; they cannot see beyond a certain distance, and have not an idea beyond to-day. Things or thoughts of large dimensions are out of their ken, but they have a wonderful discrimination for small ones. They make excellent anatomists and entomologists, while they appear unable to understand the general principles of natural history. Show them the boundless ocean, and they will discourse of pebbles—a landscape, and they talk of plants. Speak of the evils of war, and they will try to remember whether any of their acquaintance has swelled the list of killed and wounded—if they can recollect none, then they cannot see why war should be so much condemned, more particularly since they happen to have a friend who made a fortune as an army contractor, and gives capital dinners. Such men, it will be observed, never see things through the same medium which the rest of the world does; there is always a diminishing power which contracts their vision, and though aiming at principles, they fasten on a mean set of details. Many of this class are to be found in the critical world. A swarm of them fastened on the old English dramatists at the end of the last century, wrote voluminous commentaries on the meaning of single words, and indited pretty pamphlets to discuss whether we should write *Shakspear* or *Shakespeare*. In modern times, these minute observers discover, in a new book, where the commas have been left out, or misplaced; or, like Sergeant Circuit in Foote's farce, non-suit an aspiring author in the courts of criticism for leaving out an *s*. These geniuses wear *diminishing glasses*.

Then come your shy people, who cannot look you straight in the face, and only see out of *side-spectacles*; next, those who never see what is before them in its true phasis, and who, do what you will for them, torture the motive of your acts to some impulse quite different to that which dictated it. This is the consequence of wearing *distorting spectacles*.

Above all, we must not forget those psychological curiosities who pride themselves on being extremely sharp observers. They are generally gifted with piercing eyes and busy tongues, and are constantly trying to look round corners—to penetrate into places where there is nothing to see, and to make discoveries where there is nothing to find out. These are amongst the 'clever' of the human race, who boast of never being deceived, for their eyes are everywhere; though, unfortunately, it mostly happens they are everywhere but where they ought to be; and in performing their indefatigable periscope, are so often looking behind, that a stumble is now and then the consequence. These would appear to apply to their mental perception the *periscopic reflecting spectacles*.

There is, besides, a vast variety of spectacles mounted by certain individuals before their mental perceptions, which have no analogy to those to be found in the optician's catalogue. The most generally worn are professional spectacles. Physicians, for instance, often see through medical spectacles. An esteemed valeducian

of our acquaintance, who has retired from medical practice, invariably answers our ordinary inquiry of 'How do you do to-day?' with a diagnosis of his complaints; and when you succeed in drawing him out concerning the floating news of the day, he makes especial inquiries after the 'public health in your neighbourhood.' He distinguishes his friends not by their outward appearance or general dispositions, but by the state of their health; and instead of calling people by their names, he talks of the lady with the liver-complaint, the gentleman afflicted with bronchitis, or that niece of his who is troubled with syncope. He will point out Mr So-and-so as an excellent person in some respects, but blames him severely for not wearing clogs in wet weather, and talks of the poor man's catarrh as if the complaint were a moral crime. When he travels, he observes nothing but the climate and the diseases of the population: when he makes a call, he takes away the compliment of the visit by declaring he came out for a little exercise—in short, all his actions are regulated by medical principles, and all he sees is presented through a medicated medium. In a similar manner one class of men wear statistical, another geological, and a third gastronomical spectacles, the last judging of every object in nature by its eatableness or drinkableness. Lastly, the man of fashion—like Monsieur Gaultier, whose travels in Spain we noticed in a former number—sees the world through an opera-glass.

It is on account of the number and variety of mental spectacles which different people wear, and the pertinacity with which they keep them on, that truth is so difficult to be met with. Thus, a dozen men shall look at the same object, yet their account of it will differ in some material particulars; for the impressions it makes upon their minds depend entirely upon the kind of spectacles they happen to wear, which, fixing their attention upon especial characteristics, and as them only, blind them to other important features. As an illustration of this, let us suppose a number of individuals looking at some ordinary object—something plain, palpable, and about which it would appear to be impossible to differ either in description or opinion; say, for example, a flock of sheep in a field. The young observer, with his pink spectacles, paints to you their picturesque grouping, the innocent playfulness of their gambols, and the pleasing animation they give to the surrounding scenery; his account of them would be, that they are 'beautiful sheep.' He with the clouded spectacles, on the contrary, instinctively fastens his observation on the black sheep; he picks out the lean ones, and builds a theory thereon, by which he would endeavour to prove the deterioration of stock in this country; describing this particular flock as a 'wretched one.' The man with the magnifying glasses insists that there must be at least twenty score; but his friend with the diminishers pins him down to units; while the statistician with cruel pertinacity counts the whole flock, triumphantly certifying that there are exactly one hundred and thirty-eight sheep and nineteen lambs. He also reckons, that, supposing there be so many pounds of wool upon each sheep, the whole produce of the flock would be so much at the then market price of wool; that this wool would be capable of making so many yards of cloth, which cloth would, if cut to advantage, furnish so many hundred garments. Let us now suppose the gastronomer to make a characteristic remark on the fineness of the mutton, and the rich order it is in for the spit, the statist would launch into another branch of numeration, by setting down the number of joints the whole flock would cut up into: so many haunches, or, if separated, so many legs and so many loins; or, if the loins should be destined for broiling, so many mutton chops. Take the statements of either of these observers separately, and a false, or at most a limited idea of the actual objects would be derived; but put them together, and we are in possession of every fact concerning sheep which it is useful or necessary to know. Thus, the

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specific views afforded by the various sorts of spectacles which mankind put on, are of the utmost value, when assembled and properly weighed by persons who do not habitually wear any spectacles.

Few are, however, entirely without mental spectacles at some time of their lives—and how constantly are circumstances changing them! How apt are we to allow health or sickness, prosperity or misfortune, to place spectacles before our vision, which tinge everything around us with the prevailing feeling! In ill health, how 'weary, flat, stale, and unprofitable' are the same objects from which, when in the full enjoyment of health, we derived pleasure and happiness. On the other hand, how many by no means romantic or picturesque scenes are hallowed in the recollection, when viewed through the spectacles created during some moment of delight enjoyed there—the society of a friend we have esteemed, or the smile of one we have loved!

Finally, the optician will tell you that the use of spectacles by persons who do not actually require them, is decidedly injurious; and when once used, it is difficult to do without them. To a clear and comprehensive vision they are not only useless, but detrimental. It is so with the spectacles of the mind, which are either manufactured out of prejudices, or from allowing the perceptions to flow too constantly in one channel, till they draw all objects into it; washing away every fact and every thought into a gulf of false conclusions. 'There are,' says Bacon, 'helps to sight above spectacles,' and these helps it is our duty to invoke by a constant and healthful exercise of our perceptive faculties and reasoning powers.

SKETCHES IN NATURAL HISTORY.

SERPENTS.

Of the lower animals, none have been the objects of such wide-spread and long-continued prejudice as serpents. In every country, ancient and modern, they have been viewed with aversion; and yet no class of animals has furnished man with so many mythological symbols and allegories. So many, indeed, are the legends respecting serpents, that it would require a large volume to contain them; the Persians, Egyptians, Greeks, and other ancient nations having each some peculiar attribute which they ascribed to these reptiles. As the impersonification of the evil principle the serpent is associated with the first transgression and fall of man; makes armed the hand of Discord no less than the whip of the Furies: as an emblem of prudence and circumspection, they were the attribute of Æsculapius; and, twisted round the caduceus of Mercury, they were the type of insinuating eloquence. Among the Egyptians the serpent was the symbol of fertility; while the circle formed by a snake biting its own tail, without beginning or end, was the chosen emblem of eternity. The origin of some of these allusions is obvious, of others it is obscure; but from whatever cause they may have arisen, it is no doubt to the noxious properties of some of these reptiles, to their peculiar habits and appearance, and to their greater prevalence at an earlier period of history, that we are to ascribe the fear, mingled with hatred and veneration, with which they have inspired the human race.

To rescue this long abused and little known race of animals from the errors which have disfigured their history, and to view them without prejudice as a branch of natural science, has been the object of Dr Schlegel, conservator of the museum of the Netherlands, who has recently issued a work on the subject, now introduced to the British public through the translation of Dr T. S. Traill, professor of medical jurisprudence in the university of Edinburgh.* From his treatise—the only

satisfactory one on the subject—we propose to give the reader some idea of the actual character and habits of the serpent tribes.

In systems of zoology, it is usual to divide Reptiles into four great orders, of which the tortoise, crocodile, lizard, and common adder, are the respective representatives. Although all these are comprehended under the term reptiles, or creepers, the three former orders are furnished with feet more or less developed; it being only the *ophidia*, or true serpents, which are totally destitute of these organs of locomotion. The characteristics of a serpent may be said to consist in a very elongated body, furnished with a tail, and covered by a defensive armour of scales; moving along the ground without feet, it advances by undulations, or by the successive expansions and contractions of its own parts. Of the animals so characterised, some are adapted to live on land, others in water; some spend most of their time on trees, others in crevices and burrows. Taken as an entire order, Dr Schlegel arranges them into two divisions—the innocuous, or *non-venomous*, and the *venomous*; and each of these he again subdivides into families, genera, and species. We have not space to follow him in this arrangement, and it will be sufficient for our present purpose to state that, altogether, he describes two hundred and seven species of innocuous serpents, and fifty species of the venomous kind; from which enumeration it will be perceived that by far the greater number of snakes are devoid of those noxious attributes which popular prejudice has so uniformly assigned to them.

The structure of serpents, like every other portion of nature's handiworks, is finely adapted to their respective modes of existence. Serpents are true vertebrate (back-boned) animals; but the usual distinction of vertebrae of the neck, back, and loins, does not hold in their case, all the vertebrae being similar, and only diminishing in size towards the tail, or caudal extremity. The total want of feet necessarily implies the absence of a breast-bone, pelvis, &c. which unite these appendages to the trunk; hence the ribs are free, and the body is capable of a greater amount of mobility than that of other animals. The vertebrae are extremely small and numerous, those of the trunk sometimes amounting to 300, and those of the tail from 150 to 200. They play freely on each other, by means of articulations well-defined; hence that litherness and agility of body peculiar to the serpent tribes. Each set has its own pair of ribs; and the scaly articulations of the abdomen, by which locomotion is performed, always correspond to the ribs which are their levers. The ribs, acted on by the muscles, put in motion the abdominal plates, and these maintain the impulses which are successively communicated to them by the undulations of the body. The speed of these animals depends in a great degree on the nature of the body over which they move; they proceed with difficulty over a polished surface, but escape with celerity on sandy ground, or on a surface covered with dry vegetation. Their celerity, however, has been exaggerated, as it is never so rapid that a man cannot easily escape from them.

The other movements which this peculiar structure of body enables these reptiles to perform are also perfect in their kind. In complete repose, they love to roll their bodies in a spiral form, so that the head alone is slightly elevated in the centre; but having the facility of bending in a thousand different positions, they are often found simply extended on the ground in easy undulations. 'Very often,' says Dr Schlegel, 'in order to observe what passes around them, serpents raise themselves perpendicularly, supporting themselves solely on the tail, or on a part of the abdomen; their trunk is then rigid, and perfectly straight; and most frequently the head is then bent and directed forwards: at other times they bend their bodies as an S, inflating their necks in this position. Suspended perpendicularly from the branch of a tree, the boa resembles a stiff body without life. In descending from a tree, or

* Essay on the Physiognomy of Serpents. 1 vol. 8vo. Edinburgh: Maclellan and Stewart. 1843.

other tall object, serpents let themselves simply fall to the ground—their form, and the elasticity of their parts, preventing any dangerous consequences from this fall. On reaching the ground, the shock they sustain, instead of proving hurtful, impels them forward, and serves as a stimulus to their subsequent movements. In water serpents, the tail, which is slightly flattened in a vertical direction, acts as an oar in propelling the body; in tree serpents, the same organ is capable of coiling itself around branches; in burrowing snakes, it is short and conical, so as to secure and direct the movements of the trunk, and perhaps to dig into the earth; while in the greater number of terrestrial snakes, it is so formed as to offer a solid fulcrum for the body, of which it sustains the whole weight when the animal rears itself erect. Several species throw themselves on their prey with huge bounds, and seize it generally with their mouth; others secure it by twisting the tail around it; and the boas also embrace it with the convolutions of their trunk.

To obey these various movements, the general integuments are divided into numerous compartments, which form so many jointings, parallel to the parts they cover. The whole body is thus lithe and flexible, the naked space of skin between the scales being capable of extraordinary expansion and contraction. This is well illustrated in the act of feeding, when serpents are known to swallow animals of much greater volume than their own natural size. For this purpose, not only is the muscular integument of the trunk capable of distention, but the head, unlike that of other creatures, is so constructed, that its component parts (those enclosing the brain excepted) are susceptible of greater or less movement, and generally in different directions. This accounts for the enormous enlargement of the mouths of serpents when in the act of swallowing; the jaws, as well as the other parts of the head, being merely banded together by elastic ligaments. The scales, which are always symmetrically arranged, are of various shapes in the different genera, and are laid over each other, or *imbricated*, like the tiles of a roof; those covering the head, and medial line of the abdomen, being larger than those of the other parts. The epidermis, or outer coating of the skin, is cast or sloughed off at fixed and determinate periods. In order to reject the old epidermis, which begins to detach itself at the head, and especially along the borders of the lips, the serpent passes itself through herbage, and contrives, by means of slow and continued frictions, to disengage gradually the exterior layer of the skin, which is already replaced below by a new epidermis.

The appendages of serpents are few, but by no means uncommon. In some varieties the tail terminates in a simple conical scale, more or less pointed or hooked; in others it is furnished with a *rattle*, often very large, although it is but a simple production of the epidermis. Some of the boas have a pair of hooks situated at the extremity of the abdomen, which seem to aid in progression, taking the place, as it were, of hinder extremities; and in other species the snout or frontal plate is turned up like a hook or spur. Beyond these simple appendages, serpents are entirely naked; the forked wings, tails, and barbs, with which the ancients equipped them, being the unmingled invention of fable or imposture. Serpents have no external ear, and the internal organ is one of the simplest construction, which accounts for the fact, that they have the sense of hearing in a lower degree than any other class of reptilia. The same may be said of their sense of smell, which is by no means delicate. The eye of the serpent presents nothing remarkable, unless that it is covered by the exterior integument which envelops the whole body. The portion which protects the eye is of course transparent, and is sloughed like the rest of the skin. Dr Schlegel disregards the stories which have been propagated with regard to the *fascination* of this organ in serpents, and finds nothing peculiar either in its appearance or structure to warrant such a belief. Again,

the tongue has none of those barbed and spear-like appendages with which fable has armed it. It is certainly divided into two slender filaments at its point, and is capable of being protruded with more or less velocity, but beyond this it is a mere organ of touch, and does not assist either in taste or in deglutition.

With regard to the colours of serpents, there is generally an analogy between these and that of the surrounding objects in the places they inhabit; a circumstance wisely ordered by nature for their protection from their numerous enemies. Among the climbing species many are green, so as to resemble the leaves of the trees they inhabit; some can scarcely be distinguished from naked branches; while others present an appearance like that of an old trunk covered with lichens and mosses. Fresh water snakes are generally of a sombre and uniform colour; the green and blue tints of those inhabiting the sea confound them with the waves of that element. The vipers of the desert are of a dull sandy colour; those of marshes of a dusky brown; while others have their integuments adorned with the most brilliant hues, in rivalry of the tropical flowers amid which they luxuriate. With reference to the markings of the respective races, it is extremely diversified. Some have their bodies striped longitudinally; others have it barred transversely; many are irregularly speckled; while as many are zig-zagged and marbled. The faculty of spontaneous change of tint, which is possessed by some reptiles, such as the chameleon, is only observed in an inferior degree among ophidians, and that principally among the tree species.

The teeth of serpents form the most peculiar of their interesting characteristics. All serpents swallow the animals on which they live entire; hence their teeth are not formed for chewing, but are mere organs destined to inflict wounds, to detain their prey, or to assist in swallowing. These organs are of two kinds; *solid teeth*, which are common to all ophidians; and *fangs*, which are peculiar to such as are poisonous. The solid teeth are generally of equal size, though some species are provided with one or two larger than the rest; they are grooved or channelled, this channel being connected with the glands which secrete the ordinary saliva. The fangs, on the other hand, are always hollow and pointed—the perforation passing from the point to the poison glands situated at the base of these deadly organs. So soon, therefore, as the fangs strike, they press upon the venom gland, and force the liquid through the perforation into the wound inflicted. Situated at the front of the jaw, the fangs are much more liable to injury than the other teeth; hence nature has curiously provided for their protection. At rest, they are folded back in the gums, which form a sort of sheath, and are only elevated when the animal is about to strike with them. Besides, being liable to be broken, there is placed behind them several germs of new fangs, sometimes amounting to six in number, and at all stages of development, so that the animal can never be long without these fatal means of defence. Innocuous serpents are totally destitute of fangs and their accompanying poison glands; but have the ordinary salivary glands much more largely developed than the venomous tribes. The saliva, as is well known, assists in the processes of swallowing and digestion; and to serpents which swallow animals of considerable size, this fluid is of prime importance. In swallowing, a copious discharge of saliva takes place on the prey, which renders it more slippery; and while the teeth fasten themselves on one side of the victim, the other jaw advances and draws it inwards. 'By this alternate play of the jaws, during which the principal part is performed by the lower jaw, the deglutition (swallowing) is effected, after efforts more or less great, according to the volume of the prey. When the animal they attempt to swallow is too large, they are unable to introduce it into their maw until a considerable time has elapsed. Serpents found in this state offer a hideous spectacle.' It must not be supposed from this, that

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during swallowing and digestion, serpents are torpid and defenceless animals; for, when pursued, they have the power of disgorging their food, like the gull and sea-swallow among birds; and so, in an instant, can put themselves in a state of defensive activity.

The deleterious effects of the poison are already too well known to require much description. When fresh, the poison is a transparent fluid of a yellowish-green tint, slightly glutinous; and when dried, becomes viscid, and adhesive. Chemical tests show it neither to be acid nor alkali; it has no peculiar smell; and applied to the tongue, it produces the same sensation as grease. It is only deleterious when mingled with the blood; hence its effects are more terribly and speedily developed when the quantity is great, and when it is directly infused into a vein or other blood-vessel. The effects of the bite depend upon many concurrent circumstances. A part which can be fairly struck, is more dangerous than one struck in a slanting direction; and the last bites are less hurtful, owing to the poison being expended. A large animal suffers less in comparison than a small one: cold-blooded animals feel the effects less than warm-blooded; and in tropical climates, the poison is more virulent and fatal than in temperate regions. Its fatal effect on the human frame is thus described by Dr Schlegel:—'Man speedily perceives an acute pain in the limb wounded by the fangs, which only make two minute punctures hardly visible, from which a few drops of blood flow: the wounded part afterwards swells, and inflammation declares itself with more or less rapidity: the absorption of the poison is announced by general debility; walking becomes painful; the respiration impeded and laborious; the patient experiences a burning thirst; nausea and vomiting quickly succeed, often followed by great distress and faintings, which, joined to the most violent pain, deprive the sufferer of his intellectual faculties. Livid spots surrounding the wound are the precursors of gangrene, which spreads to other parts of the body, and causes death after a longer or shorter interval.'

The antidotes against the bites of snakes are as numerous and futile as the prejudices we have alluded to are unfounded and fabulous. Dr Schlegel dismisses the entire race of charmers and bite-curers as 'most frequently impostors, whose whole knowledge is founded on empiricism;' and details the precautions adopted by men of competent medical skill. These it would be inconsistent with our present purpose to notice, farther than to state, that immediately cleaning the parts bitten, scarification, cupping, and the cautery, are the most effectual. Ligatures above and beneath the wound, to prevent the spread of the poison, should also be resorted to, and sudorifics copiously administered. Chlorine has been administered internally with success; and external frictions with olive oil have occasionally proved of advantage.

Serpents are oviparous animals; the eggs of some being hatched almost immediately after they are dropped, and those of others requiring several weeks of incubation. They are of slow growth, and, like other reptiles, are said to be long-lived. Many travellers, and especially those of a more remote age, speak of serpents of a monstrous size, which they say they have encountered in their travels in intertropical countries; some they describe as forty feet in length. This Dr Schlegel rejects, affirming that the most gigantic do not exceed *twenty-five feet*; while in Europe, the largest known species attains, when full grown, to a length of not more than six or eight feet. Monstrosities do occur among serpents through disease, and through congenital malformations (such as double heads); but forms capable of motion both ways, furnished with barbed wings and other appendages, as depicted by the ancients, rest on no securer basis than popular imagination.

In their habits, the ophidians are partly nocturnal and partly diurnal, though by far the greater number come abroad during the heat of the day. They are all carnivorous, the aquatic species living more or less on fishes, the tree serpents on birds, and the smaller

species of terrestrial snakes pursuing insects, molluscs, worms, or other animals of the lower orders. Many, such as the sea species, live in society; but, generally speaking, land serpents are found independent and solitary. Although almost all have a disposition stupid, timid, and wild, yet many, such as the boas, are capable of being domesticated, and of contracting very mild manners. The true venomous snakes, however, never change their ferocious character, and, when captured, refuse to take any food, and so become victims of their obstinacy. Land ophidians hibernate or become torpid during winter, retreating in our climate towards October, and reappearing by the beginning of April. During this period the layers of fat which line their intestines are absorbed; and it is not till after some days in spring that they recover their usual strength and activity. Like all slow breathers, serpents can subsist a long time without food; the boa constrictor has been known to live six months without the least nourishment; and Dr Traill mentions two rattlesnakes which endured for a year and a half in a similar condition.

Serpents are widely distributed over the globe, being more numerous towards the torrid zone, and becoming rare and diminutive in cold regions. Jungles, marshes, savannahs, and other desert places in the tropics, form their head quarters; but the numerous enemies they have among the mammifera and birds, keep their increase in check. The badger, hedgehog, weasel, civet, ichneumon, and other carnivora, pursue them with avidity; the stork, the serpent-eater of the Cape, the kite, laughing falcon, and buzzard, are their implacable enemies, while man wages perpetual war against them wherever he and they come in contact. The desert and unreclaimed wild is the proper field of their increase; the progress of cultivation is always equivalent to their extirpation.

SUSAN OLIPHANT.

A TRUE TALE.

AT one end of a village near the celebrated Falls of the Clyde, and close on the river's brink, was situated, some years ago, a neat cottage. It could not, from its size, be the villa of a gentleman, yet it wore a superior look to the dwellings in its neighbourhood. Surrounded by a garden and orchard, the exterior of this cottage-dwelling spoke of modest plenty and humble contentment; nor did its interior disappoint the opinion formed of it. Its inmates were a man, now descending into the vale of years, yet still hale and vigorous; his wife, past middle age; and a lovely girl, their only child. James Oliphant was by profession a gardener; but though his fruit trees yielded abundantly, and his flowers and vegetables were the finest in the neighbourhood; though his wife's dairy was the neatest, and her cream and butter the sweetest, yet could not their apparent means of livelihood account for many of the comforts, and even luxuries, which were to be found in their cottage; and, indeed, there is no reason for concealing the fact, so much to Oliphant's credit, that, having been gardener for many years to an English nobleman, the latter, at his death, left him an annuity which, though small, being husbanded with frugality, and seconded by industry, went a great way. James's wife was an Englishwoman, and this will account for the air of order, cleanliness, and comfort in and around their little abode; for, though we would not be harsh on our countrywomen, who does not know that the things intended by these expressions are only known in perfection in the dwelling of the English peasant? Mrs Oliphant was somewhat arbitrary, and very reserved. She liked to rule, without giving reasons for her conduct; yet she ruled so well, and was so active and attentive to all her duties, that she merited neither unkindness nor reproof, and the voice of discord was never heard in

their habitation, where each knew and performed their own part, for the benefit of the whole. It is true the girl Susan, with her fine forehead and sunny smile, and the depth of feeling in her dark blue eyes, sometimes longed for more cheerful society than that of her parents, or a more unreserved and congenial mind than her mother's, to which to pour forth all its longings, all its aspirations. It would appear they wished her to receive an education and breeding somewhat superior to what a cottage girl might require, for she was exempted by her mother from any part in the menial offices of the little household; and, from a desire to exclude her from the contamination of low companionship, her father was her only instructor: but he was a well-educated intelligent man, as many of his class are known to be in Scotland, so that he was quite competent to direct his child's early education. She was always dressed, too, with a lady-like simplicity, equally remote from coarse plainness and flaunting vulgarity, and her own little room was adorned with care, and furnished with books of elegant literature. Allowed to choose, in a great measure, her own employment, she loved to tend the rich flowers her father's care procured for her, to listen to the happy notes of the birds among the fruit trees; but, above all, to wander on the banks of the Clyde, with some improving books, from whose silent but eloquent companionship the tone of her mind and feelings was insensibly raised to high computing and graceful thoughts, which again diffused a charm over her daily deportment, hardly to be expected from her rank in life. Treated thus with lavish indulgence, without a care or sorrow to cloud her days, what could our young heroine desire more for happiness? But yet, somehow, she envied the fond caresses and unrestrained interchange of feeling and affection which she had witnessed in poorer dwellings than theirs. She wished her mother were not so distant, and that she were invited to twine her arms around her father's neck, when she had repeated to him her daily task; but such were not their winning ways. So she locked the loving emotions of her heart the closer in that pure sanctuary, and contented herself with returning her dear parents' kindness by devoted meekness, and dutiful obedience to all their wishes.

Thus passed Susan's childhood and early youth. When verging, however, on womanhood, she earnestly sought to be allowed to go to the school of the adjoining parish, not so much to seek society, as to acquire some branches of useful knowledge which her father was not competent to impart. After short demurring, and a private consultation, father and mother consented. Eager to improve, the ardent girl pursued diligently and successfully the studies pointed out to her; but ere many months had elapsed, a sudden stroke compelled the aged teacher to call to his assistance a clever young man, the son of an early friend, who was studying for the church, and who wished to fill up his leisure by instructing the young. From this new instructor Susan obtained stores of knowledge of a higher kind than she had received at the hands of the old schoolmaster; and it will readily be anticipated that these were rendered all the more delightful to her, by their coming from a being possessed of the natural qualities which were calculated to awaken a class of sympathies appropriate to her age. With her, the mastering of a task, and the receiving for it the meed of approbation, were now matters of a deeper interest than before; in short, without being conscious of it, she had given her heart to the young teacher. It was not long after this that, a second stroke carrying off the old master, the new one sought and obtained the appointment to his situation; a humble one, but presenting a reasonable security against want. William Macdonald thought he might now, without impropriety, seek the hand of his young pupil, and it required but a few words to make him aware that he already possessed some advantages for the accomplishment of this object. After that revelation—abrupt, and almost unpremeditated on either

side—Susan returned no more to school. She shrunk with instinctive maiden delicacy from throwing herself in her lover's way; but we cannot doubt her heart beat rapturously as, after a few days of her unwonted absence, she saw her teacher on a lovely spring evening come to her home to learn the reason. Again and again he came, and she suffered herself to be led by him along the flowery bank of the Clyde. She had found what long she had yearned for, a congenial heart and cultivated mind with which to commune, and she readily promised, provided that her parents' views were in harmony with her own, to be his wife. Need it be said they gave glad consent. Though of humble birth, William's education had been liberal. His bearing was that, we might almost say, of a gentleman; his situation was comfortable; his prospects encouraging. So Susan, only in her seventeenth year, was wedded to William Macdonald.

Mrs Oliphant, exulting, gave her only child a liberal wardrobe, and substantially furnished her bed-room; her father gave her some articles, with his fervent blessing; and Susan took possession of a small but neat dwelling adjoining her husband's school.

Two or three days after the wedding, the young wife was unpacking her trunks, and arranging tidily her clothes, when Macdonald entered. 'What! is school over so soon? I did not think it was so late.'

'Why, you know this is Saturday,' replied the husband, 'leave off fatiguing yourself, and come and take a walk; but what is all this you have spread around you?'

'Dear William, my mother has been very generous and very kind,' replied Susan; 'she has stocked me with clothes and with good house linens; and see, here is a piece of Holland for shirts for you. I mean to begin them immediately.'

It is marvellous how small a circumstance will serve to reveal a propensity hitherto prevented from showing itself. Macdonald possessed many good qualities, but he was envious and avaricious; and the sight of the few articles of value now spread out before him stimulated these hideous feelings into a state of unhappy activity.

'It is very strange how your mother should have so many fine things,' he observed; 'where had she the money to buy them?'

'I know not—how should I? She tells not me her secrets, if any she has; but you forget, dear William, she was for a long time ladies'-maid, and then house-keeper, to a rich and noble family. Doubtless she saved something; but it is so kind to bestow it thus on me, that I think we had better take it gratefully, and never trouble ourselves about how she got it.'

This was said gaily and innocently; yet the next instant, as if stung by an after-thought, a crimson blush spread over the fair face and brow, and she exclaimed energetically, 'Honestly, William, I'll swear it was made. Often, often I've heard my father say how her master's family valued her incorruptible fidelity and honesty.'

'Oh, I doubt not that; I am quite sure of that, my dear girl,' promptly replied the husband; 'but—the demon spirit of avarice was knocking at his breast—' but do you think your mother has anything considerable?'

'I have not even an idea. We have had every comfort, and lived well. All she has will be mine at her death (I pray God it may be long till then). She told me so the night before we were married: and, by the way, William, what do you think of this? I had almost forgot I was just going to show it to you. My mother gave me this at the same time,' putting into his hands a very small and elegant lady's gold watch; 'it was her young lady's gift on her death-bed—for my mother sat up with her many nights—mother told me to keep it safely; it was the most valuable thing she had, and I had never seen it before. But it is only to look at, William, for me; it is not fit for me to wear, you know; but is it not beautiful?'

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fully.' The demon of avarice was gnawing at his heart. He sat buried in meditation while his young wife wound up the watch, put it to her ear, and after looking at it a few moments with girlish delight, replaced it in its case, and locked it in her drawer.

A few weeks after this unhappy event, Macdonald found it necessary to permit his wife to attend the bedside of her father, who was seized with a fatal illness. Susan was most sedulous in her attentions, and sometimes fancied the invalid looked anxiously, as if wishing to speak to her alone. At length, one day, having hastened to the cottage, she found her mother absent in the village on some necessary errand. The child of a neighbour was in the kitchen, who told her her father slept. Stealing to his bedside, however, in a few moments he awoke. 'Is it you, Susan?' asked he feebly; 'where is your mother?'

'Gone out for a few minutes, but I shall get you anything you require.'

'It is to say a few words to you I want, my child. Your mother has a will of her own; but I fear I am dying, and I will not leave the world in peace with a lie in my right hand. Susan, dear, though I have striven to be a father to you, you are no child of mine. Forgive me, Susan, for ever deceiving you thus. I say, Susan, you are not my daughter,' repeated he anxiously, as she answered not at first. 'Oh, do not talk so, father—father. He is raving!' hurriedly exclaimed the terrified girl.

'Nay, hear me; I am in my senses, and speak the truth. When I am gone, tell your mother what I have told you, and that I conjure her to confide in you, and make provision for you out of what is justly yours, not hers.' But at this instant the sound of Mrs Oliphant's return met his ear, and he stopped suddenly, apparently leaving his well-intentioned but injudicious communication incomplete. Shrinking from the idea of his wife's reproach, and trembling under her ascendancy, he left one exposed to the storm which he avoided, the person whom he ought rather to have sheltered if he could; so thoughtlessly selfish are many even whom the world calls worthy characters. Darting a penetrating glance at the uncertain troubled looks of her husband and daughter, Mrs Oliphant bustled to his side. He had fainted, and his end approached rapidly. Susan whispered her mother that he believed himself dying, which explained, or appeared to do so, the agitation she had witnessed on her entrance, though Susan said it not with that intention; indeed she knew not what to think, nor how to act, so strangely had her father's words bewildered her. Remaining with the dying man till her husband came to fetch her, they together watched the close of the scene, then leaving a neighbour with the new-made widow, they returned to their home, thus early visited with sorrow. William tenderly soothed his weeping wife; but when she reached her dwelling, she shut herself in her room, to ask her sorely agitated heart what she ought to do. 'Can it be so? Am I, indeed, not his child? A thousand corroborative circumstances flashed on her recollection. 'Whose, then, am I? The concealment tells me.' Having made the communication to her husband without suppressing a word, the poor girl clung to his breast with passionate fervour, as if fearful he would drive her thence; but, pressing her affectionately closer, he said, 'Well, my dear; compose yourself. What is that to us, that it should disturb our happiness for a moment? Are you not my wife—my own Susan still?'

These few words lightened the load of poor Susan's sorrow of more than half its weight; but she knew not that her William cherished in his bosom an adder which was to poison his peace and wreck her happiness. What did it signify to him who was her father, provided he could get possession of the ample provision Oliphant's last words pointed at?

The poor gardener laid in the grave, his widow's grief was decent, yet composed. Susan put off her bridal attire for appropriate mourning; and her husband sup-

pressed, with effort, the impatience of the demon-disturber of his repose. After questioning and cross-questioning his poor wife, who now began to be aware of the passion which possessed him, Macdonald at length insisted that Susan should deliver James Oliphant's last instructions to the widow. It had been Mrs Oliphant's habit, as was natural, never to pass her daughter's door without calling; and each evening, when they had not so met during the day, and now, especially, in the retirement of her new-made widowhood, Susan's walk with William was to her cottage. But again and again the sensitive daughter shrunk from her hateful task, till Macdonald threatened to undertake it himself; therefore, knowing he was irritable, and her mother resolute, for fear of an outbreak of temper between the only two beings in the world she had to love, the devoted young wife set out alone to perform her mission. Her mother's cottage was trim and snug as usual; the widow's grief had not hindered her accustomed cares. Susan trembled violently, but at last flattered out the substance of her last conversation with him she had ever called her father. The widow heard her out with marvelously little change of countenance and manner. At the conclusion she wept. 'Yes, my poor girl, there is a mystery about your birth that had better be left as it is, for it has already cost much sorrow. I beg you will, at least, ask no more on the subject at present. A time may come when you will know all.'

Macdonald was not at all satisfied with his wife's report of this interview. Bent on bettering his condition, the good-will of a school in the next town was to be sold, and he coveted the possession; but his wife's mother approved not of the plan, and refused the means. Several violent altercations consequently took place between him and the widow Oliphant on the subject of what he insisted was Susan's portion; and no asseverations of the widow, that she possessed only her own—and that, except by her choice, his wife was entitled to no part of it—nor yet the sorrowful pleadings of the distressed Susan, could stop the unseemly and unwonted strife. At length Macdonald, hoping to force his mother-in-law to meet his views, positively forbade any intercourse between her and his wife, and became harsh and unkind to the young and lovely being who had so lately surrendered her happiness to his keeping. The struggle between avarice and his better nature now became deadly in his breast; and one bitter autumn day he took his way to the cottage of Mrs Oliphant. Outrageous was the war of words in the scene that ensued; and the schoolmaster returned to his young wife in a state of horrible excitement. The fiend had triumphed, and was raging uncontrolled within. He vociferated words of reproach to the unoffending Susan; yea, with coward hand drove her from him, and then fled from the house. The cold chill of despair struck to the heart of the hapless Susan; but when, after a period of time, she found that her husband returned not, she flew rather than walked to the home of her contented happy childhood. Here she immediately perceived that an angry interview had taken place between her husband and her mother.

'My dear mother, tell me all, I beseech you—'

'Mother! I am—for I must now reveal what I hoped to remain secret—I am not your mother.'

'Tell me, tell me in pity,' said Susan, 'have I indeed no mother to fly to in this dismal hour? Oh! I will bless you for ever, if you will only let me call you my mother!' More moved than she had ever been by the piteous looks and words, and yet more piteous situation of the gentle, forlorn, and so lately happy girl, the widow raised her kindly, and besought her to be calm, and hear the tale which the selfish passions of her husband had, by his frenzied provocations, wrung from the long unmoved and imperious woman. Susan fixed a glazed yet anxious eye on the speaker as she proceeded. 'I shall be as brief as possible. The time, however, is come when you must know the truth; and, remember,

the disclosure has not been of my seeking. I was, as you know, housekeeper in the noble family of—. My lovely youngest lady was your mother! Susan, in an agony of distress, shuddered, but remained calm. 'There had been, as I learnt from indistinct expressions of my dying mistress, a species of marriage between her and your father, a gentleman of high degree, but it had been secret and irregular. There was not at any rate a vestige of evidence of the deed, and therefore there hung over your birth all the disgrace of illegitimacy. Your father was absent with his regiment. To shield your mother and her family's proud name, I conveyed you secretly to James, my late husband, who was head gardener, and then my suitor. He succeeded in placing you in safety with a nurse, while I remained, for the few days life was granted, with the poor mother. I never left her or her remains till I saw them laid, in unsuspected purity, in a lamented grave. The night of her death she gave me the watch you have, faintly whispering, "Give it to my child, if she survives."'

'Oh! dear and precious legacy of her who gave me being!' wept the desolate orphan, as if over a mother's grave.

'Hear me out, my poor girl. After a short time I joined him who then became my husband; and communicating with your father, who was abroad, was commanded by him to keep the birth of his child secret as the grave that had sheltered its mother, bestowing on me a sum of money, vested in my own name; but (such was the confidence reposed in me) trusting to me to provide for the offspring of error and sorrow. Not unworthy was I of the trust thus confided in me,' proceeded she proudly. 'You know, Susan, I have cared for you; I have educated and provided for you far beyond our seeming station. It was my pride and joy to surround you even with elegancies. Notwithstanding what I told you, after the unfortunate disclosure my late husband made to you, your father yet lives; and some of the books and articles you have were sent to me by him for your use.'

'Which—which are they?' again interrupted the anxious Susan.

'You shall know that by and by,' soothingly replied the woman. 'I always intended you should have abundantly sufficient for your moderate and reasonable wants; but in such a form, and at such times, as I saw best. But the violence, pertinacity, and avarice of your husband has provoked this disclosure, and to his own complete discomfiture; since I have at length convinced him,' she bitterly added, 'that neither the law he threatened me with, nor any power he could appeal to, can procure him what he seeks. The name of your father I am bound to conceal, and neither coaxing nor violence shall force it from me. The only other being who knew it, sleeps now in the silence of death. Even you, poor innocent sufferer for the faults of others, must not ask me this.' But she spoke to nearly insensible ears. Susan's brain had hardly comprehended the latter part of her communications. Seeing the condition of the unfortunate girl, she immediately accompanied her home. The wretched Macdonald, already half-repenting, yet writhing under resentment and disappointment, saw them pass his school window, but forbore to intrude upon them.

Hardly conscious as she was, when placed in her own bed, the heart-stricken mourner pointed to her drawer, and eagerly persisted that her now pitying and anxious attendant should bring her somewhat from thence. The widow at length comprehended her, and placed in the trembling hands of her protégé the watch, the legacy of her dying mother. Claspings and kissing it, she hung its chain around her neck, and hid the bauble in her bosom. When Mrs Oliphant had done what she could for the comfort of the nearly unconscious invalid, she left her to seek medical aid; first calling Macdonald, who, conscience-stricken at what had been his cruel work, hung with tender grief and self-reproach over the uncomplaining sufferer. A dry and

burning kiss, a few murmured words of fondness, were all her reply to his flood of tears and passionate intreaties for forgiveness. The same night Susan's senses wholly forsook her; and, notwithstanding all that human skill could do, ere five days more her spirit had fled, the victim of parental error, and of the selfish passions of her protectress and her husband.

When the solemn scene was finally closed, what must have been the sensations of the survivors? We would not seek to veil errors every one must condemn—selfishness and avarice persisted in, and terminating in the untimely death of a youthful wife, the only being blameless in this domestic tragedy. Macdonald obtained employment in a distant town, and returned no more to the banks of the Clyde. We trust he has spent his days in penitence and humble contentment. Mrs Oliphant remained in her cottage, and hired a person to cultivate her garden. It must have appeared, if we have faithfully sketched her character, that she was not a woman of much sentiment or sensibility; yet she mourned for the being she had brought up as her own with a quiet, yet more settled grief, than was to have been expected. Not many weeks after Susan's death, a plain travelling chariot stopped at the village inn, and a noble-looking man, its only occupant, inquired for Mrs Oliphant. Alighting, he was shown to her dwelling, and dismissed his little guide thither, with a liberal recompense. Great was the widow's surprise—much greater than usual the trial of her habitual self-possession—when he stood before her; for, though eighteen years had passed over them, she at once recognised him. After ascertaining that no one was within hearing, 'I come to see you, my good friend,' the stranger said, 'to thank you for your care of my child. Your last letter told me of her comfortable marriage. I may not indulge all I feel; but I would fain for once see her—see the living resemblance, as you have often told me, of my poor unhappy—' Agitation choked his utterance; but his faithful servant wept bitterly. 'Ah! what is this I see?' glancing at her weeds; 'you are lately become a widow; I had not at first observed it. Well, but, Mrs Oliphant'—and he was proceeding with some commonplace words of consolation. 'Tis not my widowhood I mourn, my lord, though that now seems more sorrowful than before. You have come to see your lovely child; and oh! how would her poor heart now have been satisfied! but she sleeps in the cold grave. Alas! do I live to tell it?'—wringing her hands in a paroxysm of distress. The shock was great; but the father listened with deep interest to the particulars Mrs Oliphant chose to give him of the last illness and death of his hapless child, the circumstances leading to which, it may be believed, were smoothed over, perhaps in kindness. The stranger looked around him—he saw the books he had sent her—the flowers she had reared—her favourite canary, in its spacious cage, carolling the cheerful notes she had so often listened to. He asked to have something that had belonged to her, and the watch, which the widow had taken from the inanimate remains, together with its history, was given to him: finally, he shed tears in bitter anguish over the humble grave of the being who had been wronged so deeply.

Such were the emotions wrung by remorse from a heart not wholly lost to the better feelings of our nature. A humbled, childless, unhonoured man, he returned to those scenes of high life, where there are many bosoms besides his concealing under a gay outside a sin and sorrow-stricken heart. Oh that the rich and great would reflect in time on the consequences that may flow from selfishness and error, not only to themselves, but to others, and, above all, to the one party who ever is the most innocent, though the most wronged. Here, indeed, we have seen that an effort was made to provide a moderate happiness for the unfortunate victim; but, even if her married lot had been happier, was it altogether appropriate? Alas! no. Inheriting by nature the high-toned mind and delicate tastes of her parents,

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she was cast in a field where these never could have received their proper gratifications, and where unhappiness consequently must have sooner or later befallen her; where, as it was, the shock which they received from one set of adverse circumstances proved the cause of her lamentable fate—a broken heart and an early grave.

OCCASIONAL NOTES.

SMALL COUNTRY PAPERS.

About two years ago (No. 484, former series), we directed attention to the establishment of small monthly sheets in provincial towns, where the population of the district was inadequate to the support of an ordinary newspaper. At that time only four or five of these publications had come under our notice; now their number is trebled, and we believe with considerable advantage to their respective localities. As media for advertisements, they are employed by drapers, grocers, and others, to communicate with the working-classes, among whom their circulation chiefly lies; and as popular intelligencers, they afford information on many subjects which would otherwise remain unknown to their humble readers. For example, in one now before us, consisting of eight quarto pages, we find nearly two pages of advertisements, a chapter on natural history, a biographic sketch, a tale, some fugitive poetry, and other miscellaneous matter—all more or less instructive and entertaining. The stamp authorities having determined that such monthly sheets must not contain news unless they be stamped, everything of this nature is of course omitted; but this forms no serious drawback, as, under the management of an acute editor, the sheets may always be rendered sufficiently attractive to command a remunerative sale.

We have now to notice the commencement of another class of provincial publications, exclusively devoted to agriculture and allied subjects of rural economy. These are also issued monthly; but are of a superior character, extending from eight to sixteen quarto pages, and of course selling at a higher price, though still considerably under that of a stamped newspaper. There are now three of these in Scotland—the Dumfries Gleaner, the Ayrshire Agriculturist, the Berwick and Kelso Agriculturist; and we believe a fourth is about to be started in Fifehire. We trust that other counties will speedily follow the example; and that in England, especially, such publications will be adopted as a means of disseminating among the tenantry and rural population that information on agriculture and husbandry which, according to all accounts, they so greatly stand in need of. Of those already commenced, we can speak in the highest terms of commendation. They are not only creditably got up, as regards their exterior, but their matter—original and selected—is carefully prepared, entirely free from party bias; and what adds considerably to their influence is, that all their contributions are authenticated by the names of the authors. Besides their more valuable information, they contain rural sketches, accounts of agricultural exhibitions, ploughing matches, and other local memoranda of a miscellaneous description. A few years hence, and such publications will be productive of immense benefit, not only in disseminating sound practical views within their respective districts, but in 'drawing out' our farming population to detail the results of their own practice and experience. A thousand valuable facts are yearly lost to the country from the backwardness of farmers to put their experience in print; and local sheets, of the kind we notice, if properly conducted, will collect such information, when the city newspaper could never have done so by any possibility. They will thus become vehicles of substantial information, as well as of amusement and interest, not only to the farmer, but to the labourer, who, hitherto heedless of every species of information, may be led to a better state, by having his attention first awakened by the records and descriptions of scenes and operations with which he is personally familiar.

ARTISAN ALLOTMENTS.

We learn from an article in the Penny Magazine, that a piece of ground which was formerly used by the Messrs Gott of Leeds as a tenter-field, has been converted into a common garden for the workmen employed in their establishment. This field, where the woollen cloth, at various stages of its manufacture, was hung on rails to dry, has, by the improved mode of drying in heated galleries, been rendered unnecessary for the purposes of the factory, and has thus been set aside for the exemplary object above-mentioned. The total extent is about eight acres, divided into 142 allotments of nearly equal size. Such of the workmen as take an interest in gardening are allowed to cultivate these little plots, paying a trifling sum in the form of rent, not as a source of profit to the proprietors, but to give the men an undisputed right to the produce which they may have reared. Nearly all the allotments are in a flourishing and healthy condition, each denoting by its produce the taste of its cultivator. Some contain flowers chiefly; while others (and these more general) contain such culinary vegetables as potatoes, cabbages, lettuces, onions, &c. The family of one of the workmen resides in a lodge near the entrance, and to this family the care of the garden is intrusted. Opposite the lodge is a tool-house, where, on hooks and nails properly numbered, hang all the gardening tools, such as spades, hoes, rakes, and so forth, each renter having his own tools. In this tool-house is a board inscribed with the 'rules and regulations' which the proprietors have established for the good management of the garden; such as the hours during which the workmen and their families may have access to the garden, the admission of the friends of the workmen, and other arrangements of a similar character. In a busy town like Leeds, where houses and factories are necessarily congregated very thickly, the existence of a plot of garden-ground is important in respect to the health of those who live near, independent of the good effects likely to result from the maintenance of these kindly relations between masters and workmen.

SILK MANUFACTORY OF N. STOFFELLA.

This establishment—at Roveredo, the seat of the silk trade in Austrian Lombardy—has gained a high reputation, not only for the quality of the goods manufactured, but for the philanthropic system upon which it is conducted. We glean the following account of its management from a sketch in the January number of the London Polytechnic Magazine:—Four hundred females are constantly employed, who are not only provided with their living, but every care is taken of their education. A young girl from eleven to fourteen years of age, in poverty, who can produce a certificate of good conduct and health, is apprenticed from four years and a half to six years and a half under an indenture, stipulating that she shall, during her apprenticeship, be provided with board, lodging, clothing, and instruction in religion, as well as reading, writing, arithmetic, needle-work, and all the branches of the manufacture of silk. After the first six months each apprentice receives an annual salary of 15 florins (about £1, 11s.), which sum is placed in the savings-bank of Roveredo. Those parents who are in very needy circumstances, are permitted, after their daughter has been two years apprenticed, to draw an annual allowance. The proprietor himself deposits five hundred florins in the bank every year, for the purpose of being distributed in different awards to those whose industry and skill are found the most deserving at a public examination. In case of death, the parents have a right to claim whatever funds the child may have in the bank. Upon the termination of the apprenticeship the girl is at liberty to return home, or stipulate for employment by the year (that being the shortest period for which any of them can be engaged), and receives an increase of payment according to her abilities. Those who during their apprenticeship

ship have behaved well, and distinguished themselves, are provided at the end of their term with tools and furniture to commence business. Their occupation consists in the manufacture of all sorts of silks, and every week twenty-five of the number are alternately instructed in domestic affairs. Certain leisure hours are allowed for meals, lessons, and recreation; and when they walk out, some of the teachers are appointed to accompany them. The whole establishment is conducted by Mr Stofella, and consists of twenty superintendents—namely, one director, one vice-director, six teachers, and twelve overseers.

THE OJIBBEWAY INDIANS.

THE recent visit of nine Ojibbeway Indians to England has been generally felt as an interesting event, occurring as it does so soon after Mr Catlin, by his book and lectures, has attracted so much attention to that remarkable race.

The party consists of two old chiefs, respectively of the ages of seventy-five and fifty-one; four young warriors (including a half cast, their interpreter), two women, and a girl of about ten years old. We do not pretend to give their unpronounceable seven-syllable names, translated into 'the Moonlight Night, the Driving Cloud,' &c. Mr Catlin, on introducing them at a public exhibition in London, explained that they had been brought to England from the north-east shore of Lake Huron at their own desire, on business, we believe, connected with territory, and not solely to be made a show of; and that they did not feel themselves hireling puppets was evident, through the natural and universal language of their gesticulation and expression. Their manner was far more like that of receiving strangers, whom they endeavoured, with much good nature, to amuse. In person they are tall and well made, the men, we believe, all exceeding six feet in height; straight and upright, though not especially muscular; and their step is peculiarly firm and majestic. Most of their dances appeared to us little else than a noisy and inexplicable shuffling, though an Irish lady at our elbow compared some of their movements to an Irish jig. At another time they danced round one of the chiefs, much—it is the only simile we can find—as the May-day sweeps dance round Jack in the Green; and really the chief, in his buffaloeskin blanket, was almost as bulky a personage as Jack imbricated by the fresh boughs. They keep time to these dances by a monotonous sort of chant, accompanied by the shaking of little bells (looking, for all the world, like a collection of brass thimbles) fastened to a stick eight or ten inches long; their orchestra being completed by a small one-sided drum, formed very evidently of a butter keg or flour tub—such as may be seen in many a London kitchen. Of course the chief or warrior who beats the drum remains seated on the platform; and he who shook the bells was the one round whom they danced. But the note, if we may call it a note, of each instrument was unvaried; in phrenological language, they seemed to possess the organ of Time, but not of Tune; for, monotone as it was, the intervals of time were accurately marked. So much for the peace dances, after which the warriors retired to equip themselves for the war dance; and on our last visit, a trifling incident occurred, which gave rise to a more picturesque situation than can easily be imagined.

During the interval of their absence, some of the visitors had taken the opportunity of presenting articles of different sorts, and of different value, to the two squaws and the child. Among other things a toy was given to the little girl—a bird we think it was, which, by a common movement of the stand (which forms a sort of rude bellows), produced the very unmelodious 'squeak, squeak' so familiar to many a denizen of the nursery. Now, kind reader, imagine our warriors returning with their firm majestic tread, accounted for the war dance, their bodies glaring chiefly of a bright

vermillion (we noticed, among less simple devices, a huge red hand delineated upon the shoulder of one), the jingling of the little bells with which some of their garments seemed fringed, and, above all, the ponderous tomahawk in each right hand; imagine this band, limited in number, it is true, but sufficiently formidable to remind the stranger very forcibly of the 'howling, desolating band' of the poet of Wyoming, without waiting for the

'Sounds that mingled laugh, and shout, and scream,
To freeze the blood in one discordant jar,
Rung to the peeling thunderbolts of war.'

The child holds up the toy—'squeak, squeak' it goes—the warriors stop in their stately march; tomahawks are slung at the back of their girdles, and they eagerly gather round to examine the toy. 'Squeak, squeak'; for an instant they look grave and earnest, and this was the moment they would have made a fine picture; the next, the toy was given back to the child with contempt. Have these wild Indians discovered the great truth, that only 'the useful is the beautiful'? a phrase, perhaps, prosaic to some ears, yet to our mind enshrining the very essence of poetry.

The war dance is accompanied by, if possible, louder noises of each description; and as for the war whoop which they introduce so frequently, surely the simultaneous yell of a thousand dogs would be the nearest resemblance. There is this peculiarity, however, that, while performing it, they beat the hand rapidly upon the open mouth, thus producing a sort of shake. With these hints, it is just possible that accomplished imitators of sawing, and grinding, and other unmusical sounds, might achieve something like the Indian war whoop. The war dance is performed by them in their natural state, for the purpose of exciting their feelings to the necessary pitch preceding action; and even executed here, as a scene acted, it is easy to perceive how energetic they become; indeed to a degree that makes the looker-on almost tremble, and doubt if it be only the similitude of passion. There is a kind of rude grace in many of their movements, especially when holding the pipe of peace, ornamented with feathers, in the left hand, and the tomahawk in the right; the warriors raise and present them alternately, thus offering peace or war. The flag of peace, which they also sometimes brandish, is a long strip of red cloth fastened lengthways on a stick, about a man's height, the cloth being stuck all over with white feathers. This, we are told, is held as sacred as is the flag of truce by civilised nations; and if presented in the warmest of the fight, will insure safety and protection.

Although, in the excitement of the war dance especially, they are fierce-looking creatures, there is nothing malignant in the expression of their countenances; on the contrary, in the faces of the women more particularly, one reads a character of placidity, almost of benevolence; a character perfectly agreeing with Mr Catlin's account of his long residence among them, during which time he declares he never had occasion to raise his hand in self-defence; never to his knowledge was robbed of one farthing's value; and never even had occasion to suspect he was wronged. It is much to be lamented that this interesting race of men, through the effect of constant intestine warfare, and vices and diseases introduced by the whites, should be daily diminishing in numbers. One entire tribe, that of the Mandans, which, within these eight years, consisted of two thousand, has been already destroyed by small-pox, save a remnant of some thirty or forty souls, who, in their misery and helplessness, fell victims to their enemies.

Daily, in fact, are their ranks thinning; and, in their sad future, it may be that many a 'Logan' of the wilderness shall deeply feel his desolation, even if he do not exclaim, in the same pathetic words, 'There runs not a drop of my blood in the veins of any living creature!' This truth it is which makes the visit—the bodily presence of these Ojibbeways—so peculiarly interesting; for even if they do not die away—as if they

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had only lived to enrich with their bodies the soil for the conquerors—quite as fast as Mr Catlin predicts, the advance of civilisation must rob the Indians of many of their natural characteristics. To return, however, to the party who, at the moment of our writing, are still to be seen at the Egyptian Hall in London: the squaws, like the men, have swarthy complexions, black eyes, rather small and sunken, and fine jet black hair, which they cultivate with the greatest care, anointing it, as we hear, with the pure fat of the bear, and never allowing it to be cut. The hair, which streamed over their shoulders, seemed fine and glossy, though, we should say, not comparable in point of quantity to the average length and thickness of an Englishwoman's. Yet this must not be held altogether as an argument in favour of the frequent use of the shears, since we know that the Spanish ladies, so famed for the beauty of their hair, have an equal prejudice against the practice of clipping; and we ourselves have recently met a fair young Spaniard, whose luxuriant and much admired tresses had never been profaned by the touch of the scissors.

The manner in which the squaws carry their children is curious and ingenious. Alas! in all rude conditions of humanity, the harder share of labour falls on the poor women; for warriors and hunters are too proud to work. Thus, preparing the skins for their garments, cooking, water carrying, all sorts of drudgery fall upon the squaw, who contrives to carry her infant about with her, though her hands and arms are otherwise occupied. For this purpose a sort of cradle is constructed of bear's skin, in which the child is swathed, the mother suspending it at her back by a strong band which crosses her forehead. The child, of course, is bolt upright, its little shoulders resting against those of the woman; but partly, we should suppose, to defend it from accident, and partly, perhaps, for the convenience of suspending some jingling toys, there is a slight frame-work, ornamented with porcupine's quills, constructed before the upper part of its body. Thus burdened—for the cradle itself is a heavy cumbrous machine—the Indian wife toils on; the movement and laborious action of her own body rocking and lulling, as she believes, the infant to rest.

To particularise their games (in that of ball they especially excel) might be tedious; and the manner in which, after the war dance, they sat, Turkish fashion, to smoke the calumet, or pipe of peace, may be easily imagined. In conclusion, we must congratulate Mr Catlin on the opportunity of presenting so interesting an illustration of his valuable museum; a collection gathered at the price of an amount of physical endurance, and mental energy, seldom, if ever before, voluntarily encountered. We believe, too, that he is sparing neither expense nor trouble in showing and explaining to the Ojibbeway Indians the celebrated buildings and notable curiosities of the metropolis; and, darkened as their minds must be, let us hope they will carry back to the Far West different notions of the white man from those the savage must perforce receive, if the first specimens of civilisation presented to his view be the vile outcasts of society to whom we have before alluded.

SINDE AND ITS AMEERS.

THE gradual absorption of Hindustan into the British empire, is one of the most remarkable facts connected with the history of our country. The latest acquisition—in this, as in other cases, by military conquest, and not without the plausible plea of necessity—has been Sind, a considerable tract of country on the banks of the Indus. This river, in its way from its sources among the Himalaya mountains, runs for a long distance westward, and takes a sudden bend to the south, to be afterwards swelled by the 'five rivers,' which give a name to the Punjab country, and to make its way into the Arabian sea by several mouths. For the last two hundred and fifty miles of its course, it flows through Sind, which it makes the key of the great water-transit to and from the British possessions of Mid-Asia.

Sinde is a narrow district, situated between Beloochistan on the west, and Hindustan on the east, and only averaging eighty miles in breadth. Except a range of hills which divides it from Beloochistan, the country consists of a plain, so flat, as to present from the sea a similar appearance to that of many parts of the coast of Holland: the waves on which the spectator rides seem to be so much higher than the land, as to cause apprehension that the whole district will be overwhelmed by the ocean. On entering and ascending the Indus, the country is seen to be interlaced with water-courses, consisting either of the minor channels by which the great river finds its way to the sea, or, higher up, of tributaries and canals. During the summer months, that portion of lower Sind which is occupied by the Delta of the Indus, is laid under water by inundations caused by the melted snows of the distant Himalayas. The mighty stream then rushes furiously through its channels, breaking down banks, engulfing cattle, men, and their habitations; and, before it joins the sea, uniting in one vast lake its various beds and tributaries. The turbid waters, on receding, leave behind an alluvium so rich, that it requires no cultivation to produce to the husbandman a succession of heavy crops; exactly as it happens with the Delta of the Nile. The upper portion of Sind, which is chiefly out of the reach of the inundations, is diversified by rocky eminences of slight elevation, and sandy sterile tracts, showing the original character of the lower country before it was fertilised by successive deposits. In these districts artificial irrigation is resorted to, as in Upper Egypt, by means of sluices and canals. These characteristics of the scenery are of course modified by the natural productions of Sind. The date-palm is found nearly all over the country, but its fruit seldom comes to perfection. Towards the sea, salt marshes abound, separated by jungle, stunted or luxuriant, according to the accidents of the soil, which here, except during the inundations, presents great diversities. In many places the eye wanders over large sombre tracts covered thickly by the camel-thorn and other shrubs; the most peculiar of which is the euphorbia, that drops, after a season, upon the surface of the ground, where it lies decaying, and having all the appearance of bundles of dry sticks collected by invisible hands. The fertility of the alluvial deposits rendering the labours of agriculture light, every description of grain is grown with little more trouble than sowing and reaping. The general climate is said to be as hot as that of any part of India.

The towns of Sind have a uniform aspect, which is thus described by a recent traveller:—'Nearly all are surrounded with walls, which are intended to be fortifications, but are of a very rude kind, and in complete disrepair, being built of mud, about twenty feet high, and pierced for matchlocks; in the centre of the place is a bastion or citadel overlooking the surrounding country. The Jâts and pastoral classes fold their flocks or herds under the walls, against which they build their reed huts. Every place in Sind swarms with village curs, the Pariahs of India; and these, in the absence of any police, are valuable, as keeping a constant and independent watch. The wanda, or movable villages of the pastoral population, are generally composed of reed mats thatched across rough boughs of the tamarisk. Such are also the materials generally employed by the fishermen and others living on the banks of the river: the houses are generally of one storey, and flat-roofed; in the cities, the dwellings have upper-rooms, but the apartments are small and ill-ventilated. It is impossible to conceive anything so filthy as the interior of a Sindian town. Every inhabitant makes a common sewer of the front of his dwelling; the narrow passage, scarcely admitting a laden camel, is nearly blocked up with dung-heaps, in which recline, in lazy ease, packs of fat Pariah dogs, from whom the stranger, particularly a Christian (they are true Moslems these dogs), need expect little mercy. Flies are so plentiful, that the children's faces are nearly hidden by them,

and it is utterly impracticable in a butcher's or grocer's shop to discern a particle of what is exposed for sale. Add to these mere outlines, crowded streets of filthy people, an intolerable stench, and a sun which would roast an egg, some faint idea may be formed of a Sindian town or city. The inhabitants generally sleep on the roofs of their houses for coolness.

One main street, constituting the bazaar, is always a principal feature in a place of any size. These bazaars have mats, and other coverings, stretching from house to house, as a protection against the fierce rays of the sun. Except the bazaar of Grand Cairo, few places of a similar kind present such vivid, strange, and yet interesting groups, as the great street of Shikarpur, frequented as it is by the merchants of both Central Asia and those of Eastern and Western India. The full pressure of business generally takes place about four o'clock; and then, amidst clouds of dust, in an atmosphere of the most stifling closeness, and amid the loud din of perfect chapmanship, may be seen some of the most characteristic features of the society of the East.

The haughty Moslem, mounted on his fine Khorasani steed, decorated with rich trappings, himself wearing the tall Sindian cap of rich brocade, and a scarf of gold and silk, jostles through the crowd, between whom a way is opened by the Sindian soldiers, who precede and follow him; then follows the Afghan, with a dark blue scarf cast over his breast, his long black hair falling in masses on his shoulders, his olive cheek painted by the mountain breeze, and his eye full of fire and resolve. We have also the Seyund of Pishin, in his goat's-hair cloak; the fair Herati, the merchant of Candahar, with flowing garments and many-coloured turban; the tall Patan, with heavy sword, and mien calculated to court offence; while among the rest is the filthy Sindian, and a small miserable-looking, cringing Hindoo, owning perhaps lacs in the neighbouring street, but fearing the exactions of the Ameers. These present a fair sample of the groups who crowd the principal street of Shikarpur; but we miss the wild Belooch, with his plaited hair and ponderous turban, his sword, matchlock, and high-bred mare; but the freebooter of the desert loves not cities, and is rarely seen in them. The capital, Hyderabad, situated on a high and rocky island, formed by the Indus and the Fullalee, is not the largest, but the best fortified place in Sind. In point of size it yields to Shikarpur, which stands on an elbow of the Indus, on the extreme limits of Sind, towards the north-west. This city is three miles in circumference, and its bazaar, which contains 884 shops, is half a mile in length. Except Tattah (now called Victoria), the southernmost city of any size, and Omakote, on the south-eastern frontier (famous as the birthplace of Akbar Khan, our destructive enemy of Cabul), there is not another town in Sind which need be enumerated.—Such are the most marked characteristics, natural and artificial, of the 100,000 square miles of new territory recently added to our gigantic empire in the East. We now turn to the people.

Sind is but thinly populated; a fact easily accounted for, from the depressing system of despotism to which it has been hitherto subjected. Over this country, 250 miles long and 80 miles broad, are spread no more than one million of inhabitants; just half the number of the population of the city of London. They comprise three distinct classes; consisting of, first, people from the neighbouring territory of Beloochistan, who form the military and governing part of the population; second, Hindoos, dwelling chiefly in towns, and are the sole managers of the trade and commerce of Sind; third, the natives and cultivators of the soil, or Jâts. To the first class belonged the Ameers, or rulers of Sind, who, though nominally under the authority of Cabul kings, exercised a perfectly despotic sway over the Sindians.

The word Ameer is identical with emir (governor), of which, according to M. Reinaud the eminent etymologist, it is the plural; though we pluralise it again, and

speak of the Ameers of Sind. They were originally three in number; for, after a long era of civil commotion, Futeh Ali was called to exercise the supreme power, but generously divided it with three of his brothers. He died in 1801, and one of his coadjutors in 1811; consequently the supreme power was vested in the two younger brothers, by name Meers Kurn, and Mourad Ali. The two deceased brothers left two sons, to whom they bequeathed their shares of the administration, but which was denied them by the uncles; hence the country has been harassed of late by a constant succession of civil commotions, till at length the two young chiefs obtained possession of respective portions of the revenues of Sind, with but a subordinate share of the government. Such was the state of things up to the British conquest last year.

The oppressive rule of the Ameers was scarcely equalled in India—generally famous for the despotism of its native princes. The people of Sind were the victims of a wholesale game law, which had the effect of rendering the finest parts of the country a vast arena for the sports of the Ameers. They have converted the most fruitful districts into gloomy and impervious forests for the preservation of game; gratifying their passionate fondness for hunting at every possible expense of misery to their subjects. So blind were they in indulging their favourite pastime, that Meer Futeh depopulated, it is said, a district near Hyderabad—so fertile, that it yielded two or three lacs of rupees annually—because it was frequented by a peculiar species of antelope, which he found great pleasure in hunting. It is also recorded of Mourad, that he banished the inhabitants of an ancient village, and razed it to the ground, because the crowing of cocks and the grazing of cattle disturbed the game in the neighbouring lands. Their hunting excursions are conducted with true Eastern magnificence: on setting out, they embark, with their retainers, in state pleasure-barges, called *jumpies*, and every luxury that an Eastern imagination can supply. In the hapless village nearest to the scene of their pastime, are quartered some five or six hundred followers, who, receiving merely nominal wages, are billeted; and, with their horses, devour the goats, fowls, and corn of the inhabitants without mercy.

In these hunting excursions the Belooches resident in Sind are chiefly employed, for they are nearly all the retainers of the Ameers. A few are scattered in tandas or fortified villages, quite apart from the rest of the population. The second class, or Hindoos, on the contrary, follow more useful occupations. From the rich bankers of Shikarpur, and the influential merchants of Karachi, down to the humblest keeper of a tobacco-shop, they monopolise every species of trade. Persecuted and plundered, despised, and treated most contemptuously, they, like the Jews in Europe, find a recompense for all their sufferings in the money which they contrive to amass. Not that under the government of the Ameers they would put forth the external tokens of wealth, and enjoy the respect usually paid to these insignia; on the contrary, they were compelled, for many reasons, to affect a degree of humility, which, had it been voluntary, might have entitled them to some praise. Their dress was mean, their habits were dirty, and they in most instances found it necessary to lay aside the prejudices of caste, and to neglect the external observances of their religion.* The Hindoos are looked upon and despised by the Sindians exactly as Jews are among other Eastern nations. The Jâts, or cultivators of the soil, like their rulers, are Mohammedans; hence their enmity to the Hindoos may be traced to the peculiar religious tenets of the latter people. They are generally admitted to be a peaceable, harmless, and industrious people, devoted almost exclusively to agriculture and the breeding of cattle. Those re-

* See a comprehensive and well written article in the Foreign Quarterly Review for January, entitled, Sind, its Ameers and its People.

sident in the tract lying between the southern extremity of Sind and westward to Hyderabad, rear great numbers of camels, which useful beasts of burden are distributed over the whole country. Indeed the Jât is as inseparable from his camel as the Arab from his steed. Both the traders and agriculturists of Sind were ground down by a system of taxation, which has always been found to be the most effectively depressing and despotic it is possible to invent; namely, being placed at the mercy of revenue farmers, who were perfectly irresponsible in everything except providing punctual payment of the sums they contracted to supply to the Ameer periodically. To scrape these together, every species of extortion and violation of the rights of property was practised on the devoted people, who, but for the extreme fertility of the soil, would long ago have been exterminated.

Whatever may be said of the military and diplomatic principles on which Sind has come under the dominion of Great Britain, we believe it to be generally allowed, that, as far as the people are concerned, they will be greatly benefited by the change.

CHARLOTTE CORDAY.

THE French Revolution presents an almost endless gallery of scenes calculated to move the heart to pity and wonder; but it scarcely affords one more affecting than the self-sacrifice of Charlotte Corday. The act of this young woman was, indeed, of a kind which ought never to be regarded in any other light than as a great crime; yet the generous part of mankind seem to have agreed that, all the circumstances being considered, some allowance may be made in her case, without danger to the interests of society.

It was the summer of 1793. The king had been six months dead; France had half Europe hanging on its frontiers, and several rebellious provinces within itself. The extreme danger in which the new republic stood had caused power to pass entirely into the hands of the meanest and most frantic party, led by Marat and Robespierre, while the heads of a more moderate party (Girondins) were not only dispossessed of influence, but banished to the provinces, where they were wandering in danger of their lives. The government represented only the lowest populace of Paris; but it alone possessed the energy capable of carrying the republic through such a crisis, and its supremacy was of a species of facts which, deplete them as we will, occur as resistlessly as the laws of nature.

At this time there lived at Caen, in Normandy, a young woman who, like many others of her sex, had taken a deep interest in the Revolution from its commencement. Descended from Peter Corneille, the poet, Charlotte Corday had much of the poetical temperament. She had been educated in a convent, and had constantly laboured to improve the powers of her mind. Restless under the restraints of her father's house at Armans, she had gone, for the sake of freedom, to live with a female friend at Caen. There she had formed an attachment to a young officer named Belzunce, and what first gave her an antipathy to Marat, was his denouncing her lover as a counter-revolutionist. She continued to watch the progress of events with the greatest zeal till the expulsion of her favourite politicians, the Girondins, from the national convention (June 2, 1793), when she became dreadfully incensed at the party which remained in power, and particularly at the former enemy of her lover. Her feelings were still more highly wrought when some of the proscribed Girondins, Barbaroux, Petion, and others, came to Caen, and discoursed of their wrongs in circles to which she was admitted. Immediately thereafter an insurrection of her party took place in the district of the Calvados, and the idea occurred to her, that nothing could be wanting to its success if the chief of the anarchists in Paris were put to death. Strained up to the height of

political fanaticism, she formed the resolution to go to Paris and destroy Marat, aware that her own life must fall as a matter of course, but believing it to be a small price to pay for the salvation of her country.

Behold, then, this woman, young, lovely, intelligent, pure in character, on her way to Paris, bent on a deed from which it is the nature of her sex, age, and education, to shrink with horror. To Barbaroux she represented herself as anxious to obtain the restoration of some papers belonging to a friend of hers, from the minister of the interior, and he therefore gave her a letter of introduction to M. Duperret, a member of his party still left in the convention. He and his companions had been struck by her interesting appearance, and the fervour with which she declaimed in favour of the free and enlightened republic which they had endeavoured to secure; but they had not the faintest notion of the real purpose of her journey. To deceive her own friends, she sent her father a letter announcing that the increasing troubles of France had induced her to seek refuge and quiet in England. At noon on the third day she arrived in Paris, where her first step was to see Duperret, and despatch the business she had with the minister of the interior. Then, eager to lose no time, she drove in a hackney coach to the house of Marat.

This celebrated man was of mean origin, and latterly had supported himself by conducting a paper full of inflammatory appeals to the Paris mob, while he also acted as a deputy, or representative of the nation, in the convention. Of scarecrow figure, and maniacal expression of countenance, he seemed fitted by nature to appear as a supreme demon of discord amidst the storms of such a revolution. The exigencies of the crisis had raised him to vast influence in the convention, where it was not his own voice which spoke, but that of the whole mass of the canaille of Paris, ready at any time to rush into the assembly, and compel a resolution accordant with their own. Marat had, however, been for a short time confined at home with illness, though he was not so ill as to be prevented from writing his paper, and assailing the convention with incessant advices, orders, and remonstrances, all tending to the slaughter of persons whom he suspected of a lukewarmness to the great cause. Charlotte, at her first visit, had been refused admittance; but she immediately returned to her lodging, and wrote the following letter to Marat: 'Citizen, I have just arrived from Caen; your love for your country inclines me to suppose you will listen with pleasure to the secret events of that part of the republic. I will present myself at your house; have the goodness to give orders for my admission, and grant me a moment's private conversation. I can point out the means by which you may render an important service to France.' In the fear that this letter might not produce the effect she desired, she wrote another, still more pressing, which she took herself at eight in the evening. Marat's housekeeper, a young woman who lived with him as his wife, demurred to admit her; but Marat, having meanwhile read the letter which she had sent, and hearing her name pronounced, gave orders for her being instantly brought into his room, although he was sitting at the moment in his bath. Being left alone with him, she related what she had seen at Caen; then paused, looking earnestly at him. He eagerly demanded the names of the deputies whom she had conversed with, and, snatching up a pencil, began to write them down, adding, 'Very well, they shall all go to the guillotine.' 'To the guillotine!' she exclaimed; at the same time drawing a knife from her bosom, she plunged it into his heart. The wretched man could only utter one cry to his housekeeper, 'Help, my dear!' (*A moi, ma chère!*) when he fell lifeless. The housekeeper, and a messenger who was folding newspapers in an adjoining room, rushed in, and found him covered with blood, while Charlotte Corday stood serene and motionless by his side. The messenger knocked her down with a chair, and the housekeeper spurned her with her feet. The

noise attracted the neighbours, and the whole quarter was speedily in commotion. Charlotte arose from the floor, and encountered with placidity the threats and abuse of those who surrounded her. Certain members of the section, drawn to the scene by the spreading tumult, struck by her beauty, her courage, and the calmness with which she avowed her action, interfered to save her from brutal immolation, and conducted her to prison, where she continued to confess all with the same tranquil assurance.

The news of the assassination of Marat spread rapidly through Paris, and excited universal consternation, as well as grief and rage, so great was the importance at this time attached to his public services. The act was instantly attributed by the popular voice to the proscribed party of the Gironde, and made the pretext for excessive severity against such members of that party as were in prison, so that what Charlotte designed for a blow at the anarchists, only did harm to her own friends. 'Such,' says M. Thiers, 'will ever be the case in similar circumstances: a party is proscribed—all are indignant; one, of particular ardour of nature, bursts out with a signal act of revenge, which is laid to the account of the whole, though nothing could obviously be less for their interest, as it invariably is employed to justify further severities.' The utmost honour was paid to the remains of the so-called martyr. The Jacobin club was inclined to demand for him a situation in the Pantheon, notwithstanding a law which decreed that great men should have stood the test of twenty years before obtaining such a distinction. They joined to buy up the presses with which he had printed his paper, the *Friend of the People*, that they might never fall into less worthy hands, but be employed, if possible, by some one who should write as zealously and as ably for the popular cause. His body lay in state for several days; it was uncovered to show his wound; at the same time, from a motive truly French, his visage was white-washed, in order to conceal the darkness produced by a rapid corruption. To pursue the account given by M. Thiers in his *History of the Revolution*—'The popular societies and the sections defiled in procession past his bier, strewing it with flowers. Each president pronounced an oration. The section of La Republique was the first to approach. "He is dead!" exclaimed its president lugubriously—"the friend of the people is dead, and by assassination! Let us waive all eulogy over his inanimate remains. His eulogium is in his career, his writings, his gory wound, his death! Scatter flowers over the pallid corpse of Marat, my countrywomen! Marat was our friend; he was the friend of the people: it was for the people he lived, it is for the people he died." At these words, young maidens made the circuit of the bier, and threw fragrant flowers on the body of Marat. The orator resumed: "But sufficient are the lamentations; hear the mighty soul of Marat, shaking off its bonds, and saying, Republicans, abstain from further weeping. To republicans is permitted but one tear, after which their country claims all their sympathies. It was not I who was marked for assassination, but the republic; it is not I who call for vengeance, but the republic, the people, yourselves!"

All the societies and all the sections came one after the other around the coffin in which the body of Marat lay extended; and if history record such scenes with some minuteness, it may teach men to reflect on the influence of prepossessions, and lead them to ponder seriously when they mourn the mighty of this earth, or revile the unfortunate of their era.

Meanwhile, the trial of the young murderess was expedited with that rapidity for which republican forms of process were remarkable. Two deputies were implicated in the arraignment; the one, Duperret, with whom she had had intercourse, and who had accompanied her to the minister of the interior; the other Fauchet, late a bishop, previously suspected on account of his connexion with the right side, and whom a woman, insane

or malignant, falsely asserted to have seen in the galleries of the convention with the prisoner.

Charlotte Corday, when conducted before the tribunal, preserved her wonted calmness. The indictment was read over to her, after which the court proceeded to call the witnesses. The first who appeared was stopped by the prisoner, without allowing him time to commence his deposition. "It was I," she said, "who killed Marat." "Who incited you to commit this murder?" demanded the president. "His crimes." "What do you mean by his crimes?" "The calamities he has caused since the Revolution." "Who are they who have instigated you to this action?" "Myself alone," she proudly answered; "I had long revolved it in my mind; nor would I ever have taken counsel of others for such a deed. I wished to restore peace to my country." "But do you imagine you have sacrificed all the Marats?" "No," responded the prisoner, with a sigh; "alas! no."

She then permitted the witnesses to conclude, and after each testimony, repeated, "That is true; the deponent is right." She defended herself from one charge alone, namely, her pretended concert with the Girondists; and she confronted only one witness, the woman who implicated Duperret and Fauchet in the case; after which she seated herself, and listened to the remainder of the process with perfect serenity. "You perceive," said her advocate, Chaveau-Lagarde, briefly compressing her defence, "that the accused confesses all with imperturbable firmness. Such composure and self-oblivion, sublime in one respect, can only be explained by the most exalted political fanaticism. It is for you to judge what weight is due to this moral consideration in the scales of justice."

Charlotte Corday was condemned to undergo the penalty of death. Her beautiful countenance evinced no emotion as the sentence was delivered, and she returned to prison with a smile on her lips. She wrote to Barbaroux, to whom she related her journey and achievement in a letter full of feminine grace, spirit, and dignity; she told him her friends ought not to regret her, for a lively imagination and a susceptible heart threaten stormy lives to those who may possess them. She added, that she was now fully avenged on Petion, who had, when at Caen, suspected for a moment her political sentiments. In another letter to her father, she intreated pardon for having disposed of her life without his permission. 'I have,' said she, 'avenged many victims—prevented others. The people will one day acknowledge the service I have rendered my country. For your sake I wished to remain incognito, but it was impossible. I only trust you will not be injured by what I have done. Farewell, my beloved father! Forget me, or rather rejoice at my fate, for it has sprung from a noble cause. Embrace my sister for me, whom I love with all my heart. Never forget the words of Corneille,

C'est le crime qui fait la honte, et non pas l'échafaud.

[It is the crime which makes the shame, and not the scaffold.]

On the second day after the death of Marat (July 15), Charlotte was conducted to the place of execution in front of the Tuilleries. As she passed along, she met the insults of the meaner class of people with the modest firmness which never left her. The better class, affected by her self-devotion and fortitude, as well as by her beauty, beheld her in silence, some of them with tears. She mounted the scaffold with a cheerful and even triumphant air, when, contrary to the custom of the time, not a voice was raised against her. The executioner having removed the kerchief which covered her bosom, she blushed deeply; and when, half a minute afterwards, he held up her head to the gaze of the multitude, this mark of offended modesty had not yet passed away. Many of the men around the scaffold, from a natural emotion of respect, had uncovered themselves; some of her own sex, who had come to revile her, stood mute

and abashed; and when the crowd separated, it was observed to be with a melancholy feeling very unusual at such scenes during the Revolution.

What we know of the extravagant sentiments which reigned at that time, could alone prepare us for an anecdote of a singular nature connected with the death of Corday. A young man, named Adam Lux, a commissary from Mayence, happened to see Charlotte as she was passing to the scaffold. Her appearance produced in him that passion which is usually called love at first sight. Entirely possessed by this feeling, he became incapable of calm reflection, and lost all sense of personal fear. His feelings towards Charlotte were at the same time extended to everything in any way connected with her—even to the guillotine by which she had suffered; which he now regarded as a sacred altar, on which the blood of royalty, beauty, and virtue, were offered up. He published a pamphlet on the death of Charlotte, proposing to erect a monument to her memory, with the inscription, 'GREATER THAN BRUTUS,' and ending with an invocation of her shade from the Elysian fields, where he conceived it to be dwelling with the other illustrious victims of the Revolution. There can be no doubt that the reason of this young man had been overturned by the excitements of the period. But such considerations were not then admissible. He was quickly imprisoned, tried, and executed.

Justice has since been done to both Marat and his murderers. He is universally regarded as an execrable wretch, who stopped at no cruelty in the way of accomplishing his objects, and whom nothing but an extraordinary crisis in public affairs could have ever invested with any public respect. To Charlotte Corday has been awarded unmixed pity and admiration, a meed the more to be prized, that it is given in despite of the natural horror felt at the crime of assassination, and the reluctance of mankind to admit anything which, by palliating it in one case, may tend to encourage it in another. Her portrait is introduced into the popular histories of the period, and in none of these works do we find one harsh word applied to her.

A WORD FROM A RETURNED EMIGRANT.

Is an article entitled 'A Glimpse of the Far West in 1843,' contributed to a late number of the *Newcastle Courant* by one who subscribes himself 'A Returned Emigrant,' we find the following account of the social condition of the settlers in Wisconsin and Iowa. The description, we take leave to hint, is possibly over-coloured, and should perhaps be taken with some degree of allowance for the disappointed feelings of the writer.

'Independently of the absolute and increasing wretchedness [among the settlers affected with sickness], there are evil circumstances and influences inherent in frontier settlements, like those of Wisconsin and Iowa. The greater part of those who are at present occupiers of land in those territories are "squatters," who have selected a fine piece of land, and taken possession by the erection of a house. They have no title beyond that of choice, backed by brute force; and on the strength of this they proceed to break the land, fence it, raise crops; in short, to treat it precisely as though they had purchased it of the general government. The statute law does not recognise this usurpation of public property; and to protect themselves from its operation, the squatters form associations, every member of which is pledged to help his neighbour in retaining possession of the land he has claimed, but for which he is unable to pay. Thus matters go on for years, until the president, worried by demands, or an empty exchequer, orders that the land be put up for sale. Such of the squatters as hold money, pay; nine-tenths, who could not raise a dollar to save their lives, give themselves no concern about the matter, relying on the support on the general association.

An illustration of the working of this system occurred a short time ago at Milwaukee, the principal town in Wisconsin. The land on and around Prairie du Lac was brought forward for sale, after due notice, and the squatters attended in a body to watch proceedings. All were without the means of purchasing the ground they occupied,

even at a dollar and a quarter an acre, and consequently took no notice of the officer by whom the business was to be transacted. At length, on the naming of one of the most fertile sections, a person bid, and had the lot knocked down to him. At night, a formidable body of the squatters proceeded to the hotel which the stranger had been seen to enter. A few of the more resolute went at once to his bedroom, and demanded that he should render his purchase null and void by not paying, as usual, on the following morning. He refused. They then presented pistols, and threatened him with death, did he refuse to sign a document which they presented, and which purported that he should pay for the whole of the property without delay, receiving payment again from the squatters, without interest, in trifling yearly instalments. No way of escape remained open, and he signed! A lawyer will say that this document would not be binding. Doubtless not in the Queen's Bench. But in Wisconsin, the purchaser knew too well his men to neglect its fulfilment. His property would otherwise have been forfeited; for though he might have had the satisfaction of seeing his name enrolled in the land-office books, and even turned out the squatters, no man would have dared to enter upon it either as tenant or purchaser. Ham-strung cattle, pulled-down houses, burning corn-ribs, were promised with a moral certainty of fulfilment. Again, in Illinois, the judge of the supreme court pronounced the recent bankrupt law to be unconstitutional. This was a serious decision for the thousands who had taken advantage of the act to cheat and ruin their creditors; and in one county a bankrupts' association was formed to protect themselves by violence from the consequences to which they were exposed. This step has been effectual. I might cite other instances in which the law was set at defiance within my own knowledge. It may be sufficient to mention, that at a meeting of settlers which I attended—where all the farmers of the district were present—a lawyer recommended tarring and feathering as a fit punishment for any one who should act against the will of that meeting, though that will set at naught congress law; and the general laugh that followed showed how ready they were to act upon the suggestion. The chairman, on the occasion, was the chief resident magistrate, and a leading democratic member of the territorial legislature.

The law is powerless for good—for evil it is too efficient. A hard-working Scotchman, who settled within a few hundred yards of where I lived, was charged with burning a shed which one of the squatters had erected. The case was carried before a justice—whose ostensible mode of life was bee-hunting!—and although there was no evidence which an impartial person would entertain for a moment, he was held to bail to answer at a higher court. An offer was subsequently made to him, that if he would pay a certain sum to the aggrieved party, and to the justice, he should not be further troubled. Eventually, on the recommendation of some of his more experienced neighbours, the poor fellow paid the required sum.

Because there is no justice, it does not follow that there is no law. Unluckily, there is too much. More litigation is constantly occurring in a village of a hundred houses, than in an English town twenty times its size. In Sauk village, with sixty families, there were three lawyers—one of them a tailor, who plied with his needle when clients were scarce. So fond of quarrels are the squatters, as a body—so given to annoy their neighbours on the most trivial occasions—that it is a common practice with them to engage a lawyer by the year, giving him so many bushels of wheat, for which he is ready to do all their business, be it much or little, dirty or clean. Thus rid of law's most formidable feature—its expense—these men resort to it without compunction, and about things of which a conscientious man would be ashamed to speak.

The writer, of course, concludes by warning intending emigrants against going to these districts; and our feelings point to the same conclusion. The almost universal powerlessness of the law for any good purpose, or, to state it in the mildest terms, the extreme rudeness of manners, in the western parts of the United States, renders emigration thither by no means advisable. All things considered, therefore, Upper Canada still seems to us to be the most advantageous place of settlement on the American continent. In that colony, whatever be the drawbacks in the physical condition of the country, it is at least certain the laws are generally respected, and civil rights enforced with all the usual efficiency of British administration.

A MUSICAL GENIUS.

M. Guzikow was a Polish Jew, a shepherd in the service of a nobleman. From earliest childhood, music seemed to pervade his whole being. As he tended his flocks in the loneliness of the fields, he was constantly fashioning flutes and reeds from the trees that grew around him. He soon observed that the tone of the flute varied according to the wood he used; by degrees he came to know every tree by its sound, and the forests stood round him a silent oratorio. The skill with which he played on his rustic flutes attracted attention. The nobility invited him to their houses, and he became a favourite of fortune. Men never grew weary of hearing him. But soon it was perceived that he was pouring forth the fountains of his life in song. Physicians said he must adjure the flute, or die. It was a dreadful sacrifice, for music to him was life. His old familiarity with the tones of the forest came to his aid. He took four round sticks of wood, and bound them closely together with bands of straw; across these he arranged numerous pieces of round smooth wood, of different kinds. They were arranged irregularly to the eye, though harmoniously to the ear; for some jutted beyond the straw-bound foundation of one end, and some at the other, in and out, in apparent confusion. The whole were lashed together with twine, as men would fasten a raft. This was laid on a common table, and struck with two small ebony sticks. Rude as the instrument appeared, Guzikow brought from it such a rich and liquid melody, that it seemed to take the heart of man on its wings, and bear it aloft to the throne of God. They who have heard it, describe it as far exceeding even the miraculous warblings of Paganini's violin. The emperor of Austria heard it, and forthwith took the Polish peasant into his own especial service. In some of the large cities, he now and then gave a concert, by royal permission; and on such an occasion he was heard by a friend of mine at Hamburg. The countenance of the musician was very pale and haggard, and his large dark eyes wildly expressive. He covered his head according to the custom of the Jews; but the small cap of black velvet was not to be distinguished in colour from the jet black hair that fell from under it, and flowed over his shoulders in glossy natural ringlets. He wore the costume of his people, an ample robe that fell about him in graceful folds. From head to foot all was black as his own hair and eyes, relieved only by the burning brilliancy of a diamond on his breast. The butterflies of fashion were of course attracted by the unusual and poetic beauty of his appearance, and ringlets *a la Guzikow* were the order of the day. Before this singularly gifted being stood a common wooden table, on which reposed his rude-looking invention. He touched it with the ebony sticks. At first you heard a sound as of wood; the orchestra rose higher and higher, till it drowned its voice; then gradually subsiding, the wonderful instrument rose above other sounds, clear, warbling, like a nightingale: the orchestra rose higher, like the coming of the breeze—but above them all swelled the sweet tones of the magic instrument, rich, liquid, and strong, like a sky-lark piercing the heavens! Those who heard it listened in delighted wonder, that the trees could be made to speak thus under the touch of genius.—*Mrs Child's Letters from New York.*

PIGMY TRIBES IN ETHIOPIA.

Major Harris, who has recently returned from Abyssinia, whither he had been despatched on a diplomatic mission by the British government, mentions the existence of a pigmy race, which he considers identical with that described by Herodotus as found only in tropical Africa. The Doko, as these pigmies are called, are a perfectly wild race, not exceeding four feet in height, of a dark olive complexion, and, in habits, more uncivilised than the Bushmen of Southern Africa. The country they inhabit is clothed with a dense forest of bamboo, in the depths of which they construct their rude wigwams of bent cane and grass. They have neither idols, nor temples, nor sacred trees, but pray resting on their heads, with their feet against a tree. They have no king, no arts, no fire-arms; possess neither flocks nor herds; are not hunters; do not cultivate the soil; but subsist entirely on fruits, roots, mice, serpents, ants, and honey. The serpents they beguile by whistling; and although the forest abounds in elephants, buffaloes, and lions, they have no means of destroying or entrapping them. They wear no clothing; and in their persons are said to be very unprepossessing, having thick lips, flat noses, and diminutive eyes.

THE DWELLINGS OF THE POOR.

BY MRS JAMES GRAY.

Are they not lowly cottages,
With moss and flowers o'ergrown,
And little gardens 'circling them,
Like an enchanted zone?
Do not sweet blossoms incense breathe
Into the very door,
And early roses gaily wreath
The tiny casements o'er?
Do they not lie in fertile vales,
Far from the world of care,
With silver streamlets wandering by,
And health upon the air?
Does not the little wild bird love
To build beneath their eaves,
And her young brood first learn to move
Amidst their sheltering leaves?
And o'er the sloping hills of green,
That wall each valley round,
Do not the Sabbath bells ring out
With glad, though solemn sound?
And where, beneath a quiet sky,
The drooping willows wave,
Does not the church tower's shadow lie
Upon the poor man's grave?
And have not these fair dwellings store
Of fitting 'habitants,
A simple people, free from care,
With few and simple wants;
And happy children born to die
Upon the same dear soil,
And crowned with flowers, even while they ply
Their light and cheerful toil?
Oh, did not visions such as these
Fill many a kindly heart,
How in the poor man's lot could we
Take such a careless part?
Rich man! put by these thoughts that rise
Like the fond dreams of youth,
And nerve thine heart, and clear thine eyes,
To look upon the truth.
Go to the crowded city—search
Through narrow lane and street;
And say how many scenes like these
It is thy lot to meet.
Here are no flowers, no merry birds,
The poor man's heart to cheer,
No gardens gay, few pleasant words
To greet thine eager ear.
Come to this chamber, close and dim
Its stifling atmosphere,
And see those pale slight girls who ply
The busy needle here.
All day, and oh how oft all night,
With hot and trembling hands,
These poor ones labour for the mite
Their weary toll commands!
Yes, scenes like these will meet thee still,
And sadder things than these;
Vice in its naked hideousness,
Pale famine, fell disease,
Shalt thou, with virtue's lofty brow,
The poor man's errors blame?
No—thank the Almighty's grace that thou
Art not the very same.
There may be dwellings of the poor
Decked like a fairy scene;
But these, assure thy inmost heart,
Are 'few and far between.'
Then put away the selfishness,
The sloth that thou hast known,
And make the poor man's deep distress
A something of thine own.
Seek, then, the dwellings of the poor;
Thy kind and soothing words
May reach some heart, and wake a tone
Of gladness 'midst its chords.
And strive with an unwearied strife,
Whose efforts ne'er may cease,
To open in the poor man's life
Some spring of hope and peace.

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